SM-385, Fowler Store St. Mary's County Capsule Summary

circa 1870; 1888

The Fowler Store is a well-preserved historic site in the village of Mechanicsville. This two-part structure, consisting of the western three-bay dwelling, and the eastern five-bay store building, retains most of its original exterior fabric. Its substantial size and prominent corner location defines the intersection of Old Route 5 and the Chaptico-Mechanicsville Road.

The Fowler Store, which continued to operate until 1943, is the oldest commercial structure still standing in the village. The earliest mention of a store located on this property was in 1873 when George T. Burroughs devised his "store house and lot" to Richard T. Copsey. In 1888, J. Woodley Latham erected the eastern five-bay addition on the property. The store has been under Fowler family ownership since 1889.

SM-385, John A. Fowler Store St. Mary's County Maryland Comprehensive Historic Preservation Plan Data

Historic Context

Geographic Organization:

Western Shore

Chronological/Developmental Period: Agricultural-Industrial Transition, 1815-1870

Industrial/Urban Dominance, 1870-1930

Historic Period Theme:

Architecture

Economic

Resource Type

Category:

Building

Historic Environment:

Village

Historic Function and Use:

Store

Private Residence

Known Design Source:

Unknown

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES

Survey	No.	SM-385

Magi No.

DOE __yes __no

4 Name				
1. Nam	e (indicate pr	eferred name)	. <u>-</u>	
historic Geo	rge T. Burroughs Stor	e		
and/or common	John A. Fowler Stor	re (pref.)		
2. Loca	ation			
	011.5			
street & number	Old Route 5			not for publication
city, town M	lechanics ville	vicinity of	congressional district	5
state M	I D	county	St. Mary's	
3. Clas	sification	•		
Category district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered not applicable	Status _x_ occupied unoccupied work in progress Accessible _x_ yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
4. Own	er of Prope	rty (give names a	nd mailing addresses	s of <u>all</u> owners)
	r Enterprises Inc.			
name Fowle	•			
street & number	3505 Harrisburg (Court	telephone no	0.: 301-884-3390
city, town	Mechanicsville	state	and zip code MD 2	0659
5. Loca	ation of Leg	al Descripti	on	
courthouse, regi	istry of deeds, etc. Clerk	of Cart		liber DBK 264
street & number	St. Mary's County	Courthouse		folio 43
city, town Led	onardto w n		state	M D
6. Rep	resentation	in Existing	Historical Surv	eys
title				
date			federaistate	e county ioca
_apository for s	urvey records	•		
city, town			state	

7. Description Survey No. SM-385 Condition Check one Check one ___ unaltered x good

x original site

moved

date of move

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

altered

deteriorated

unexposed

ruins

__ fair

The Fowler Store is located on the north side of Old Route 5 in Mechanicsville at the intersection of Old Route 5 and the Mechanicsville-Chaptico Road. The Store faces south, with the principal gable oriented on an east/west axis.

The Fowler Store is a substantial complex consisting of a western two-and-ahalf story, three-bay dwelling and an eastern two-and-a-half story, five bay Store. According to the current owner, the smaller western section predates the larger and adjoining eastern section. A partial basement exists under the dwelling which rests on ironstone piers. Here, hewn beams and round logs support the house. Cut nails are visible in the basement's exposed framing. A fireplace was once located in this basement. The Store has no basement and is supported by both hewn and sawn beams which rest on ironstone piers and wood blocks. Both roofs are covered with pressed tin shingles.

The south (main) facade of the store is sheathed in German siding and has a roofline broken by two gables. Across the full front of this five bay facade is a one-story screened porch with a tin roof. This porch, supported by square posts and with a square post baluster, replaced an earlier turned post porch. The two western bays of this facade consist of a pair of six-over-one sash windows with narrow surrounds and a four-light-over-two-panel door with a two-light transom window and sidelights. The eastern three bays consist of an identical entrance door and two six-over-one sash windows with narrow surrounds. An historic photo shows that this elevation originally consisted of two Victorian shop windows and a central double door entrance. The second floor is lit by five two-over-two sash windows with narrow surrounds. Each gable is lit at the attic story by a small Palladian window. To the west of the Store stands a two-and-a-half story, three bay dwelling house which is stepped back from the line of the Store. Like the Store, this dwelling is sheathed in German siding and has a tin roof. It has a front porch across the first floor which wraps around the western side of the house. This porch is supported by square posts with decorative sawn brackets and has an asphalt shingle roof. The first floor is lit by three two-over-two sash windows with wide surrounds. The entrance door is a nine-light-over-two panel door with a three light transom and sidelights. The second floor is lit by three twoover-two sash windows with narrow surrounds. The central gable at the roofline is lit by a small Palladian window like those which light the attic story of the Store. The roof is pierced at both the east and west ends by an interior brick chimney.

The western elevation of the Store is blind on the first floor and lit on the second floor by one two-over-two sash window. The western gable end of the dwelling house is lit on the first floor by three two-over-two sash windows with wide surrounds and on the second floor by two two-over-two sash windows and one six-over-six sash window with narrow surrounds. The attic is lit by a small Palladian window.

<u>8. 5</u>	ıgn	iticance		Survey No. SM-	385
1400- 1500- 1600- 1700-	-1599 -1699 -1799 -1899	Areas of Significance—(archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture architecture art commerce communications		ng landscape architectur law literature military music	science sculpture social/ humanitarian theater
Specific	dates	unknown	Builder/Architect	unknown	
check:	ar Appli	cable Criteria:A d/or cable Exception: of Significance: _	A _B _C _D	-	
Prepare support	both	a summary paragraph	of significance an	d a general statement	of history and

The Fowler Store is a well-preserved historic site in the village of Mechanicsville. Its substantial size and prominent corner location defines the intersection of Old Route 5 and the Chaptico-Mechanicsville Road. Unlike most

structures in Mechanicsville, the Fowler Store retains most of its original exterior fabric.

The Fowler Store, which continued to operate until 1943, is the oldest commercial structure still standing in the village. The earliest mention of a store located on this property is in 1873 when George T. Burroughs devises both his "store house and lot" to Richard T. Copsey. It is unclear how much earlier the storehouse was actually built.

According to the current owner, his grandfather had always said that the dwelling was built in 1869 and used as a store until the eastern Store section of the complex was built in 1871. While the dwelling may have been built at this time, the Store was clearly built later. Perhaps the 1871 date refers to a small storehouse which formerly stood on the site of the new Store building.

Construction of the Store is noted in the <u>St. Mary's Beacon</u> of December 8, 1887. The paper notes, "...On the site of Burroughs and Mattingly's old stand, Mr. J. Woodley Latham is having a large and commodious storehouse erected..." Due to both the increase in value of the property from \$740 in 1887 to \$1700 in 1889 and the mention of the transfer of "store House, dwelling, and lot" in 1889, as opposed to the 1887 transfer of "store House and lot," it appears that the large Store building was constructed by J. Woodley Latham around 1888.

Thomas H. Fowler purchased this store from J. Woodley Latham in 1889, beginning the Fowler chain of ownership which continues to this day. In addition to supplying the community with everything from hats to harness plow points, Thomas Fowler maintained a twenty-two horse livery stable in conjunction with the store. John A. Fowler became possessed of the property in 1922 and conducted business here until 1943. Fowler store records from the early 1900s are in the hands of the current

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. SM-385

Fowler, Henry Jr. Personal Interview. November 1993. Guyther, Dr. J. Roy Personal Interview. November 1993. King, Julie and Elaine Eff. Transcription of Mechanicsville Cannery Tape, 1989.

10. Geographica	al Data		
Acreage of nominated property Mechanicsvile UTM References do NOT comple	een 1 & 2 ac		Quadrangle scale 1 : 24000
A Zone Easting Northin	ng	BZone	Easting Northing
C		D	
Verbal boundary description and with the public road to All F			on the State road near its intersection 264/43
List all states and counties for p	roperties over	apping state or c	ounty boundaries
state	code	county	code
state	code	county	code
11. Form Prepar	ed By		
name/title Elizabeth Hughes, H	istoric Sites	Surveyor	
organization St. Mary's Count	y DPZ	d	late 11/30/93
street & number		to	elephone 301-475-4662
city or town Leonardtown		S	state M D

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust Shaw House 21 State Circle Annapolis Maryland 21401 (301) 269-2438 MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST
DHCP/DHCD
100 COMMUNITY PLACE
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023
-514-7600

SM-385, Fowler Store St. Mary's County 7.1 Description

Contributing Resource Count:

The north elevation of the house consists of a modern two-story addition constructed around the turn of the century. This wing is covered in a variety of sidings including weatherboard, German, and aluminum siding. The first floor is pierced by two doors, one two-over-two sash window and one small one-over-one sash window. The second floor is lit by two six-over-six sash windows with narrow surrounds. The north elevation of the Store consists of a two-bay, gable end section sheathed in asbestos shingles. It is pierced on the first floor by two two-over-two sash windows and a four-light-over-three-panel door. The second floor of these western-most bays is lit by two six-over-six sash windows with narrow surrounds. The attic story is lit by one six-over-six sash window. The eastern end of the Store consists of a four-light-over-three-panel entrance door and a one-story, two-bay, gable roofed addition pierced by six-over-six sash windows and entrance doors. This addition once served the store as a warehouse. The second floor of the Store's east end is lit by two two-over-two sash windows and one small six-over-one sash window.

The east elevation of the Fowler Store is lit on the first floor by three two-over-two sash windows. Here, there is also a four-light-over-three panel door with a shed roof portico covered in tin shingles. The second floor is lit by two two-over-two sash windows and the attic story is lit by a small Palladian window.

The interior of both the dwelling and the Store has been divided into apartments. Only the interior of the dwelling was seen. The dwelling was constructed with a center hall plan which was reworked around 1946. An open stringer stair with scroll decoration, turned balusters, a turned newell post, and a molded hand rail survives. There are also some four panel doors located throughout the house.

One gable roofed outbuilding sheathed in weatherboard siding underneath asphalt shingles stands on the property. This structure is supported by cinderblocks and was moved here by the current owner. The current owner remembers that a chicken house, an outhouse, and a barn once stood on the property.

SM-385, John A. Fowler Store St. Mary's County 8.1 Significance

owner. Further information regarding the Fowler family and store is contained in the transcribed tapes of a 1989 interview with Henry Fowler, Jr., Maddox Burroughs, and Johnny Wood. The transcription of this interview, conducted by Julie King, Regional Archaeologist for Southern Maryalnd, and Elaine Eff, of the Maryland DHCP, is available at the Jefferson Patterson Park and Museum and at the Maryland DHCP in Crownsville.

SM-385, John A. Fowler Store St. Mary's County 8.2 Significance

Chain of Title

TO: Fowler Enterprises, Inc.

FROM: Henry J. Fowler

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber DBK 264, folio 43.

DATE: December 22, 1976.

NOTES: Transfer of two parcels. 1.) containing between one and two acres of land located on the state road near its intersection with the public road to All Faith Church.

2.) land known as "Blacksmith Shop."

TO: Henry J. Fowler and Susan F. Fowler, his wife.

FROM: John A. Fowler and Josephine P. Fowler, his wife.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber CBG 22, folio 487.

DATE: February 28, 1949.

NOTES: Transfer of all that tract of land located on the state road near its intersection with the public road to All Faith Church and containing betweeen one and two acres of land.

TO: John A. Fowler

FROM: Joseph H. Ching, Trustee

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JMM 1, folio 193.

DATE: September 12, 1922.

NOTES: Sale of property is the result of a Circuit court judgement.

TO: Joseph H. Ching, Trustee FROM: Thomas H. Fowler

RECORD: St. Mary's County Equity Case

DATE: 1922

NOTES: Thomas H. Fowler died intestate. Consequently, his estate was settled in the Circuit Court of Maryland. Joseph H. Ching was appointed as Trustee on May 1, 1922.

TO: Thomas H. Fowler

FROM: J. Woodley Latham and Susan E. Latham, his wife.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JFF 11, folio 298.

DATE: August 8, 1889.

NOTES: Transfer of "the store House, Dwelling, and Lot situated and lying in the

village of Mechanicsville." Price: \$1700

SM-385, John A. Fowler Store St. Mary's County 8.3 Significance

TO: J. Woodley Latham

FROM: John T. Ballenger and Margaret S. Ballenger, his wife.

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JFF 10, folio 162.

DATE: September 29, 1887.

NOTES: Transfer of the "Store House and Lot ... beginning at a stone planted in front of Mrs. George W. Burrough's Hotel and Dwelling house about 40 feet from said Hotel and opposite the northwest ____ and running in a straight line to the Three Notch Road leading through Mechanicsville to a stone planted near said road, thence with said road to a stone planted near said road until it intersects the Lot of John T. Ballenger upon which a Blacksmith Shop is erected, thence in a straight line to a stone planted on the public road leading to All Faith Church opposite Sylvester Adams Blacksmith Shop or until it intersects the Lot belonging to Mrs. George W. Burroughs, then in a straight line to an oak stump and thence in a straight line to the place of beginning..."

TO: John T. Ballenger

FROM: Richard T. Copsey

RECORD: St. Mary's County Land Records, Liber JFF 10, folio 102.

DATE: August 13, 1887.

NOTES: Transfer of the "Store House and lot...bounded on the one side by the Three Notch Road on another by the Lot belonging to J.T.Ballenger, on another by the lot belonging to George H. Burroughs, and on another by the lot belonging to Mrs. Walter Mattingly..." Price: \$1005

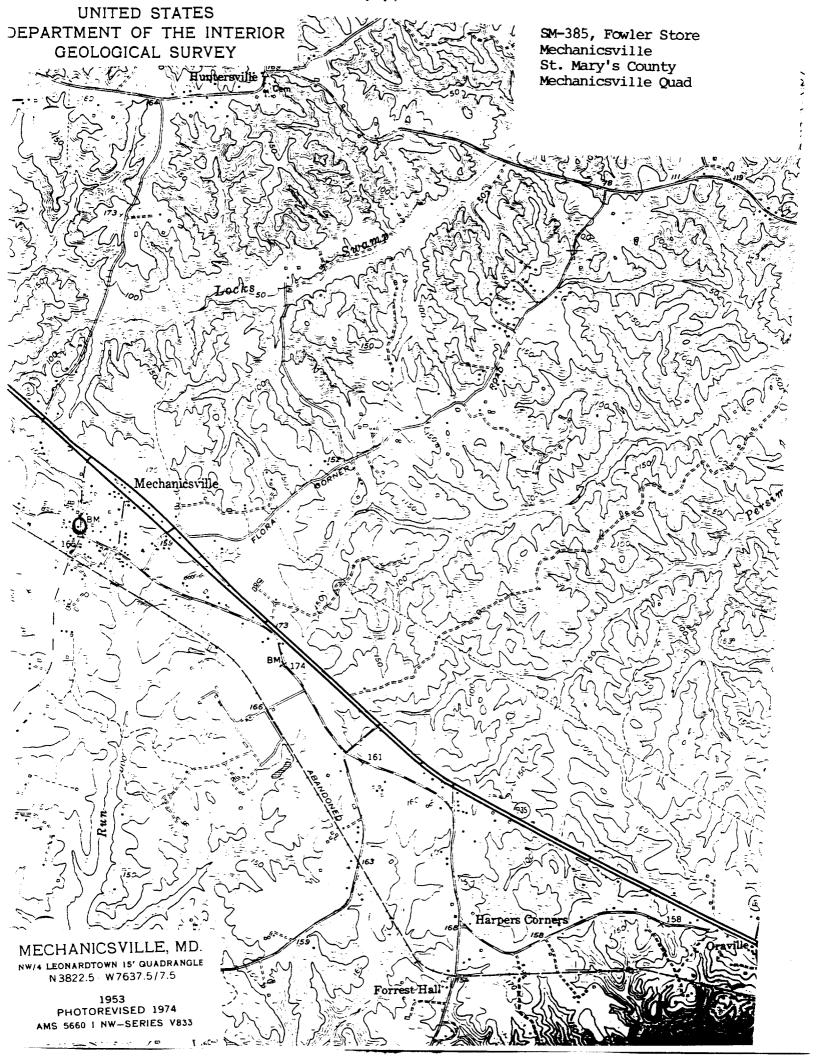
TO: Richard T. Copsey

FROM: George T. Burroughs

RECORD: St. Mary's County Testamentary Records, Liber JTMR 1, folio 337.

DATE: October 28, 1873.

NOTES: Item V: "I give and bequeath to Richard T. Copsey the Store house and lot in Mechanicsville, barn excepted, embracing about two acres more or less, with the exception also of 1/3 of the rents of said storehouse and lot, which excepted third I wish to be paid to Lydia Ann Copsey until she comes in possession of the house and lot on which I now live...[after which] she shall have no more claims on rents of the storehouse and Richard T. Copsey will have the entire storehouse and lot in fee simple." Regarding the barn, he also notes in Item V, "I also wish the barn on the Store house lot in Mechanicsville to be for the use of Mrs. Margaret E. Copsey for farm purposes, until Richard T. Copsey comes of age." It seems likely that George Burroughs originally purchased this property as a vacant lot and subsequently erected a building here for use as a storehouse. Descriptions of properties transfered to George Burroughs prior to 1873 are not very specific, so it is unclear from whom he purchased this lot. One possibility is a 3 3/4 acre lot located on Three Notch Road which he purchased from Charles M. Bond Jr. in 1860 (JTB 3/416) for \$125.





w Inte	*		



SM- 385, SORM A MULTIPLE STEPPE





SH 385 Same A 1-01 L. SKAR

4/6



11 JU ELE NOT TERROR الم

S/I 3/80 / JUNE A FOURT SECURE



The form the state of the state S14- 28 F